



U.S. Department of Justice
KENNETH L. WAINSTEIN
United States Attorney for the
District of Columbia

Judiciary Center
555 Fourth St. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20530

PRESS RELEASE

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Former Caregiver of a Mentally Retarded Adult sentenced for criminal abuse

Washington, D.C. - Reginald Nichols, a former care giver to a mentally retarded adult, was sentenced in D.C. Superior Court by the Honorable Rafael Diaz on July 18, 2006 to one count of criminal abuse of a vulnerable adult, announced United States Attorney Kenneth L. Wainstein and District of Columbia Inspector General Charles J. Willoughby. The defendant pled guilty to the charge on May 18, 2006. Nichols, 47, of the 600 block of Emmanuel Ct., NW, Washington, D.C., faced up to 180 days in jail. Judge Diaz imposed a sentence of 120 days which was suspended except for 45 days of incarceration. Judge Diaz also ordered 2 years of probation, during which time the defendant was prohibited from working with or providing care for vulnerable persons or persons with disabilities. The judge's sentence also included a mental health evaluation, and drug treatment.

Nichols was formerly a one-on-one care giver for a 28 year-old mentally retarded man who resided at a group home in Washington, D.C. According to the government's evidence, Nichols assaulted the man in his care while both were on a bus in Northwest Washington, D.C. while in transit to a day treatment program on January 30, 2006.

In announcing the sentencing, United States Attorney Wainstein and Inspector General Willoughby praised the work of Patient Abuse Coordinator Jonathan Rich of the OIG Medicaid Fraud Control Unit (MFCU) for his investigation. They also commended Assistant United States Attorney Keith Becker and Special Assistant United States Attorney Stuart Silverman, an attorney with the MFCU.